

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants have amended claims 1, 5-10, 18, 29, 35 and 37 and cancelled claims 2-4, 11-17, 19-28, 30-34, 36, 38-40.

Claim 1 as amended is directed to a sustained release oral matrix tablet (support found, for example, on page 6, line 21) and it is specified that the release-retarding agent comprises in combination hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose and hydroxypropyl cellulose. Support for this aspect can be found in, for example, original claim 3 and all Examples.

Claim 18 is amended, wherein it has been specified that the non-functional layer(s) surround the tablet, which is implicit from the word "coating" (*e.g.*, page 5, line 15).

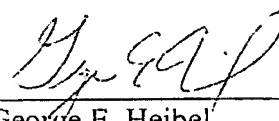
Claim 29 is amended, except that the coating with one or more nonfunctional layers has been made optional (*e.g.*, based on original claim 1).

Entry of this Preliminary Amendment before the calculation of the fees and examination is respectfully requested.

Authorization is hereby provided to charge any required fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0912.

Respectfully submitted,

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